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AUTHOR Rabe, Bonnie
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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on a collaborative approach that was developed in 1978 in response to teacher dissatisfaction with staff development efforts. INSERV (Central Arizona Inservice Consortium) was formed, composed of the Arizona Educational Association, nine school districts, the state department of education, and the College of Education at Arizona State University. By using networking as a strategy, the institutions were more likely to build training programs which were responsive to local needs, and which provided the resources of the University and professional organizations without fragmented or duplicated efforts, traditional thinking, and ineffective delivery systems. INSERV developed by-laws to facilitate collaborative governance, and set goals and program objectives. Five INSERV function areas were approved: (1) clearinghouse; (2) coordination of inservice efforts; (3) sponsoring of programs for administrators; (4) internal management and development; and (5) evaluation and assessment of progress and attainment of inservice goals. A chronology of INSERV development and a list of INSERV activities in 1980-1981 are given, as well as recommendations for others interested in implementing a network approach. (FG)

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COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE: NETWORKING FOR IMPROVED STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Ms. Bonnie Rabe, MA.
Executive Director
INSERV

Central Arizona Inservice Consortium
Phoenix, Arizona

SP 017 799

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Collaborative Governance: Networking for Improved Staff Development Programs

This presentation will overview the problems faced by school districts, colleges of education and professional organizations in working to develop and deliver effective staff development programs individually.

In an age of shrinking resources, in terms of staff time as well as money, new approaches for maximizing existing resources must be found and utilized.

This paper therefore describes a collaborative approach that was developed to improve staff development efforts and that is currently working within a consortium of school districts, the State Department of Education, the College of Education at Arizona State University, and the Arizona Educational Association in Arizona'a Maricopa County.

The effectiveness of a consortium is based upon networking theory, which proposes that a network can be more effective than an individual in terms of increased power in joint action, and in increased utilization of resources in communication.

I. Problems with current efforts in Staff Development

(from Professional Development: Inservice Education, Priority for the '80s by M. Johnson, National Council of States on Inservice Education, 1980)

With the increased attention to inservice education has come a move to reform it, for in its traditional form it has been found wanting. Teachers are widely known to be dissatisfied with it. Their dissatisfaction is documented in at least two fairly recent surveys: a representative national sample of teachers (Bartholomew, 1976) and a sample of teachers from California, Georgia, Michigan and twenty-one urban/rural projects around the nation (Howey, 1978). The indictment of inservice education contains the following counts, articulated by teachers, teacher educators and teacher organization staff:

1. Inservice education has not placed enough emphasis on improving school programs or teacher performance.
2. Inservice education has not addressed teacher's urgent, day-to-day needs.
3. Inservice education has been required of teachers and imposed and delivered by others.
4. Inservice education has violated many principles of good teaching.
5. Inservice education has been fragmented, unsystematic, devoid of a conceptual framework.

Other counts against inservice education are that it has usually been conducted outside the classroom, on the teacher's personal time, and at the teacher's personal expense. It has not been a "first order of business" either for the teacher or the school district. In the school district's budget it has been a highly vulnerable item, desirable if possible, expendable if not.

The catchwords of the reform are all about: teacher center, job related, needs response, site specific, school program oriented, collaboratively planned. Jargon

they may be, awkward they certainly are; but they express the essence of the reform:

1. away from remote learnings, toward concrete applications;
2. away from external direction, toward local needs and goals; and
3. away from unilateral control, toward joint planning.

II. Networking as a strategy for improved Staff Development

With the problems outlined above that staff development programs are currently experiencing, reform of staff development practices becomes a difficult and complex issue. With unskilled staff developers, shrinking resources, turned off teachers, and school boards and superintendents not knowledgable about the linkage of effective staff development to school improvement - how can improvement of current staff development efforts be approached?

Viewing each of the institutions that typically provide inservice education (school districts, colleges of education, professional organizations, and state departments of education) it seems unthinkable for each not to capitalize on the rich resources of the others, and for all to gain in the process.

Some school districts have attempted the job of training their teaching staff in isolation from the resources of the university or other school districts. Some have done a fine job, most have found it to be an overwhelming task without the necessary resources in terms of adequate staffing, consultant time, and a conceptual framework.

Many school administrators work sincerely to develop worthwhile staff development programs, but lack the skills or knowledge necessary to successfully implement them.

Colleges of education are also recognizing the need to collaborate with the field in development of inservice programing. Research has shown that effective staff development is rarely conducted by college faculty removed from the school setting.

Both school districts and schools of education need to begin a needs and resources interchange which would enable both to keep the programs and staff currently threatened by declining enrollment.

School districts also duplicate inservice efforts that could be planned collaboratively at great savings.

Overall the results of isolated attempts at improvement of staff development have been disappointing and have encouraged fragmented efforts, duplication of efforts, traditional thinking, ineffective delivery systems and waste of the rich resources of the university as research base and schools as field-testing laboratories.

The education profession is no different from any other human enterprise; the quality of the process and product is directly related to the commitment, coordination, and expertise of those individuals comprising the enterprise. Education is a people business and, as such, is a highly complex profession. As society changes, as values shift, as knowledge continues to explode, as the world shrinks and outerspace expands ...expectations for and demands upon education and the educator change. Yesterday's milieu of unchanging values, simple truths, and predictable futures has disappeared; continually evolving values, relativistic life guides, and uncertain futures are now the order of the day.

Because the entire world has changed, it is essential that methods of insuring professional competence undergo corresponding changes. A college degree and certification as an educator are no longer enough; continuous professional development on the parts of all educators is imperative. Continuous professional development, in turn, cannot be provided through antiquated delivery systems; the delivery system must change to accommodate new needs and new demands.

Recognition of the preceding led to the formation of a multi-agency consortium for inservice education. Functioning under the acronym INSERV, the Central Arizona Inservice Consortium is dedicated to addressing the following propositions:

> ...Educators, be they technicians, skilled craftspersons, artists, innovators and/or theorists have universally recognized the importance of inservice activities as an integral part of their professional responsibilities.
>
> ...Improving education is inherently related to improving personnel. The preservice preparation is both general and specific in nature. The amount and complexity of this material, coupled with the difficulties of establishing the many dimensions of the professional role of the educator, makes it virtually impossible to acquire skills adequately in pre-service teacher education as it is presently structured.
>
> ...In today's complex society, the varieties of knowledge and skill to function effectively in different areas has established the need for a shift in inservice education from a concept built around professional competence to one of continuous professional development.
>
> ...The need for collaboration and sharing among the college of education, school districts, and the State Department of Education and professional education associations is evident. The combined efforts of all facets of the educational enterprise must be channeled toward developing more effective techniques and skills and toward professional development of all personnel. The shared approach can result in better professional knowledge and research, in improved educational opportunities for all learners and in greater unity among all those who share in society's number one task--education of all citizens. Each of the partners in providing excellence in education has unique insights and unique contributions to make and likewise shares specifically in the results attained.

INSERV has functioned for the past two years as a formal organization which is dedicated to promoting improved inservice activities among members. Currently nine school districts, the Arizona Education Association, the State Department of Education, and the College of Education at Arizona State University are members.

The facilitation of collaborative relationships between agencies and institutions involved in teacher training is seen as a step resulting in improved teacher training strategies. Working collaboratively with school, university, and community personnel, the institutions involved are likely to build training programs more responsive to local needs and to develop materials and techniques which will improve the performance of both teacher and child.

III. Collaborative Governance

The effective governance of a consortium is critical to the achievement of its goals. Without appropriate representation and efficient management, the consortium loses its focus and becomes undirected. By-laws must be developed for a permanent organization

to rely upon as a base, funding and in-kind contributions must be determined and agreed upon.

The INSERV consortium struggled with these issues; and it is this process, rather than the final structure, which is the important element for building commitment.

The consortium has developed a set of By-laws and is formally governed by these through an intergovernmental agreement approved by all member institutions. Two governing bodies have responsibility for the goals and activities of INSERV.

The INSERV representative body, called the INSERV Council, is composed of thirty one representatives:

2 representatives from each school district (1 teacher, 1 administrator)
2 representatives from the Arizona Education Association
2 representatives from the Arizona Department of Education
9 representatives from Arizona State University.

They have overall governance responsibility and meet formally twice a year.

A smaller group drawn from this group makes up the Executive Committee. This committee is composed of:

1 representative from each school district keeping a balance of administrator representatives and teacher representatives
1 representative from the Arizona Education Association
1 representative from the Arizona Department of Education
3 representatives from Arizona State University

This group is the active working and decision making body of the consortium. They meet monthly throughout the school year and direct the work of any ad hoc committees. Currently five committees are working on each function area. Membership for these committees is drawn from the larger council group to encourage more active participation and also to utilize this resource.

Funding is limited at present and is an issue to be dealt with in the near future. Each district contributes $60 for operations as well as teacher release time to attend meetings, workshops, and to consult to others. Both Arizona State University and the State Department of Education have contributed duplication services and consultant services as well as time of their staff. The College of Education and now the Teacher Corps project have funded the salary of the Executive Director. Each member has demonstrated willingness to be creative in finding in-kind areas of contribution when needs existed. This has been sufficient to the present date, however more ambitious projects will probably require increased funding. We plan to apply for outside funding as well as internal.

IV. Goals and Programs

Five function areas have been determined as appropriate for the consortium. Objectives have been written for each and an activity plan to achieve these objectives has been outlined for 1980-81.

Much of the efforts of the Executive Committee centered around developing the goals and defining the staff development issues that INSERV would concern itself with. This effort was important in that the representative group became committed to the goals that they had struggled over. However, beyond a certain point it became nonproductive until members could translate the broad goals into specific activities to implement.

Since the potential range of activities for the consortium is enormous, it was difficult to select the most productive or worthwhile activities for INSERV to become involved with. A helpful guide was to consider any activities in view of a few guiding principles.

1. We are seeking methods for improving inservice education both through increased coordination and through improved delivery systems.
2. We are very aware that effective staff development has a big impact on overall improvement of schools.
3. We will work from the base of what is known about effective inservice (principles) have that guide us in all our activities.

Following are the five function areas and goals, the objectives for each function area, and the activity plan for 1980-81 developed to achieve these objectives.

1) CLEARINGHOUSE: INSERV will function as a clearinghouse for professional development issues, information and programs among members.
   - Continuation of INSERV-INFO, the newsletter and official communications vehicle for the organization.
   - Establish a communications network to and from the Executive Committee and the administration and teachers of the districts.
   - Establish a professional hotline service for referral on inservice needs.
   - Co-sponsor informational workshops on state-mandated educational topics.
   - Develop information packets regarding four mandated educational topics for distribution to both members and non-members in the educational community.

2) COORDINATION OF INSERVICE EFFORTS: INSERV will serve as a vehicle for collaboration of professional development among its members.
   - Develop a process for identifying educational issues and needs of districts.
   - Share needs identified by districts for possible coordinated efforts.
   - Coordinate with the professional development programs of each member to make significant programs of information available to all members.
   - Explore ways to assist the continuation of the State Department of Education's consultant cadre effort within the INSERV member districts.
   - Coordinate with staff development components of both the State Title IV proposal and the Special Education plan.
   - Develop other ways to share resources.

3) INSERVICE PROGRAMS: INSERV will sponsor programs of inservice at the administrative level for the managers and coordinators of teacher inservice education. These programs will be aimed at assisting them in reforming and improving present practices in the planning and delivery of teacher inservice education.
   - Plan and provide a program for the administrative level within the membership.

4) DEVELOPMENTAL: INSERV will focus on 3 organizational areas: legitimization of INSERV, internal management, and fund procurement.
   - Legitimizing and sponsoring of INSERV by the districts.
   - Developing the staffing and Council members needed.
   - Seek additional funding for consortium needs.

5) EVALUATION: INSERV will develop and conduct evaluation and assessment of the progress and attainment of INSERV goals.
   - Develop evaluations for all INSERV workshops or other sponsored activities.
   - Develop criteria for reviewing inservice activities submitted for INSERV approval.
   - Develop process for monitoring the progress and attainment of INSERV goals.

INSERV

Central Arizona Inservice Consortium

ACTIVITIES 1980-81	Goal Area	Target Date
1) Publish the INSERV-INFO newsletter once a month from October - April. This newsletter contains inservice education news, serves as a clearinghouse of available inservice activities, and publicizes inservice activities of members to be shared.	Clearinghouse	October 1980-April 1981
2) Meet with each members District Council to orient them to INSERV, distribute three needs assessments and publicize the workshops to be held in the Spring.	Coordination	January 1981
Two Workshops for Administrators:		
3) Effective Staff Development: Its Impact on School Improvement. Thursday, February 5, 1981. A one day workshop for school board members, superintendents, staff development coordinators and principals. The focus will be on what research is finding to be characteristic of effective schools, and how staff development programs can be effectivley utilized to improve schools.	Developmental	February 1981
4) Delivering Effective Inservice: Skill Building. Thursday, March 5, 1981. A one day workshop for staff development coordinators and principals. The focus will be on effective models of staff development and with skill building in how to plan, deliver, and evaluate teacher inservice.	Program	March 1981
Two Informational Workshops for Teachers:		
5) "Know Your State Department" Thursday, February 19, 1981. A one day informational workshop highlighting the programs and services of the State Department of Education.	Clearinghouse	February 1981
6) "Educational State Mandates and District Policy" To facillitate a small group of key teachers and administrators from each district in a) exploring the policies developed by that district to comply with state mandates and b) develop procedures for disseminating important information about these policies to all teachers in each district.	Clearinghouse	March 1981
INSERV will serve as a coordination vehicle in three ways:		
7) Assisting districts in pooling resources where beneficial or cost effective by compiling information on the needs and resources available and distributing the information back to superintendents and principals for their use.	Coordination	February-March 1981

ACTIVITIES 1980-81	Goal Area	Target Date
8) Setting up linkages between identified needs and identified teacher expertise (cross-district). Assist districts in arranging appropriate inservice or consulting arrangements. Compile a list of outstanding teachers obtained in the needs assessment then match the teacher expertise identified with needs identified, and set up linkage between districts or schools with needs and teacher expertise.	Coordination	February-March 1981
9) Identify, with the coordinator of staff development at each district, inservice offerings that they would be willing to open to others. Compile the available offerings and distribute this information back to superintendents, principals, and through the INSERV-INFO. Assist in scheduling teachers or administrators to go to appropriate offerings.	Coordination	January-February 1981
10) INSERV will assist districts in evaluating any inservice activity they are conducting on request.	Evaluation	On-going
11) If districts have an inservice program that they would like disseminated, submit it through our approval process and we will assist you in dissemination in all our member districts.	Evaluation	On-going

V. Development of INSERV

Exploration of how to develop a more collaborative approach to inservice education was initiated by the Teacher Corps project and the staff of the College of Education at Arizona State University during the 1977-78 school year. A two day workshop involving a number of school districts, the State Department of Education, the Arizona Education Association and Arizona State University was held in the summer of 1978 to explore this concept. A major outgrowth of this workshop was the "Interim Council for Inservice Education."

During the Fall of 1978 the Interim Council worked to specify the governance and purpose for a permanent organization.

By-laws were written and in January of 1979, seven school districts, the Arizona Education Association, the State Department of Education and the College of Education at Arizona State University became the charter members of INSERV.

The charter members of INSERV, upon ratification, were:

Chandler Unified School District
Kyrene Elementary District
Madison Elementary District
Phoenix Elementary District
Phoenix Union High School District
Tempe Union High School District
Washington Elementary District
Arizona Department of Education
Arizona Education Association
College of Education, Arizona State University

1978-79

In its first full year of activities, INSERV was involved in moving from an idea to a plan to an ongoing, active organization. By-laws were written and accepted, standing committees organized and appointed, and four workshops held.

This academic year also marked the first field-centered inservice education activity for INSERV. A comprehensive Staff Needs Assessment survey was conducted in each of the consortiums' school districts for the purpose of providing a clear look at the kinds of staff development activities which INSERV should feature. These instruments proved to be the link between and among INSERV and each member of the organization that guided much of the work for the group in the early part of 1979-80.

1979-80

A review of 1979-80 and its INSERV activities gives a indication of the continued growth, development and maturing of the organization. Under four headings, the following is a sample of the major projects and primary areas of focus of the group.

New Members

- Roosevelt Elementary and Paradise Valley Unified school districts joined INSERV; bringing the total number of institutional members to 12, 9 of which are LEA's.

Organizational Projects

- Appointment of an Executive Director
- Beginning of INSERV-INFO, the newsletter and official communications vehicle for the organization.
- Bylaws revised and updated
- Careful study of INSERV's purposes, goals and functions conducted by ad hoc committees and accepted by the Executive Committee
- Identification and delineation of INSERV's specific roles in its work with other educational agencies

Collaborative Activities

- INSERV acted in its "clearinghouse" role to help announce more than 35 inservice education opportunities in INSERV-INFO, and, by personal contacts, a significant additional number.
- Acting in its "approved and recommended by INSERV" role, local school district inservice sessions on "discipline" and "decision making" being conducted by Madison and Washington Elementary School Districts, were made available to all INSERV districts.
- INSERV personnel served on planning and project-proposal-writing committees and brought the presence of the consortium to numerous schools and agencies. Teacher Center proposals, facilitating the new Basic Skills mandates, a College of Education - NIE proposal, the continuing work of the Teacher Corps and the Arizona Teacher Residency program are a sample of these kinds of activities.
- INSERV collected and coordinated a consortium-wide needs assessment project, identified persons who had expertise to bring to those needs and began a coordination of all these efforts with the existing programs and cadres of the AEA and ADE.

Major Projects

- INSERV was a prime sponsor of two meetings - "Reading in the Content Areas," cosponsored with the Chandler schools, and "Know Your State Department of Education," in conjunction with the Arizona Department of Education. More than 250 teachers and administrators participated in these activities.

The INSERV consortium has developed and is in the midst of implementing an extensive activity plan to achieve its goals for 1980-81. Its future rests on the success of these activities and on its ability to remain a viable structure from which staff development efforts can be improved.

VI. Implementation - Issues and Problems

Many problems have of course arisen and will continue to arise as the consortium grows and develops. The challenge is to meet these problems constructively so that we will continue to evolve and grow to our full potential.

Based on the experiences of the INSERV consortium, the following recommendations are offered for some guidance to others interested in utilizing the network approach:

- An executive director or some other type of arrangement for staff time and leadership should be formally provided.
- Spend time determining the goals of the consortium. What is it that members really want out of it.
- The goals of the consortium must be derived by the core representative group. This reflects the fact that the process of developing the goals is just as significant as the goals that are developed.
- Clear objectives and specific activities should be written based on the goals. People have trouble grasping the concept of a network unless they have activities that they can link to it.
- Establish a good communications network to the key decision-makers within each member institution. Their understanding and support is vital.
- Key decision-makers in each institution should be educated to the program goals and kept informed of their progress.
- Establish services of the network that benefit members. Good response to requests for internal funding can be built in this way.
- Seek some temporary funding support base until the credibility and productiveness of the consortium can be established.

Problems to be dealt with:

- The time commitment from representatives to the consortium governing body is critical. People must be willing to devote some time and must be supported by their institutions in terms of time (release time for teacher representatives, priority of administrators' time).
- Working out "turf" problems should be done quickly in as straight forward a manner as possible. Maybe there are some areas where it is not feasible to network.
- Spending time to determine goals is important. However, many people become frustrated with this process and may want to drop out.
- The goals and activities must be monitored to make sure that they are still relevant and a need for members. Needs change and the network must be responsive.